

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1 1. An operating table comprising:

2 a bearing column;

3 a table top mounted on the bearing column, wherein the table top is displaceable from  
4 a middle position transversely to a longitudinal axis of the table and tiltable about a tilting  
5 axis that is substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis of the table; and

6 a control device that automatically activates a transverse displacement of the table top  
7 in a direction towards the middle position during a tilting movement.

1 2. The operating table of claim 1, wherein the control device automatically displaces the  
2 table top in the direction of its middle position transversely to the longitudinal axis of the  
3 table when a predetermined critical angle is exceeded during a tilting movement.

1 3. The operating table of claim 2, wherein the critical angle is predetermined as a function  
2 of the displacement of the table top from its middle position transversely to the  
3 longitudinal axis of the table.

1 4. The operating table of claim 3, wherein the control device comprises an electronic control  
2 unit.

1 5. The operating table of claim 4, wherein the control unit comprises a comparator element  
2 for comparing an actual tilting angle with the predetermined critical angle.

1 6. The operating table of claim 5, wherein the control unit comprises a computing element  
2 for calculating the predetermined critical angle as a function of the displacement of the  
3 table top transversely to the longitudinal axis of the table.

1 7. The operating table of claim 5, wherein the control unit comprises a memory element for  
2 storing critical angle values as a function of the displacement of the table top.

1 8. An operating table comprising:

2 a bearing column;

3 a table top mounted on the bearing column, wherein the table top is displaceable from  
4 a middle position transversely to a longitudinal axis of the table and tiltable about a tilting  
5 axis that is substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis of the table; and

6 means for automatically activating a transverse displacement of the table top in a  
7 direction towards the middle position during a tilting movement.

1 9. The operating table of claim 9, wherein the means for automatically activating a  
2 transverse displacement of the table top automatically displaces the table top in the  
3 direction of its middle position transversely to the longitudinal axis of the table when a  
4 predetermined critical angle is exceeded during a tilting movement.

1 10. The operating table of claim 10, wherein the critical angle is predetermined as a function  
2 of the displacement of the table top from its middle position transversely to the  
3 longitudinal axis of the table.

1 11. A method of supporting an operating table, the method comprising:  
2 supporting a table top of the operating table on a bearing column;  
3 tilting the table top about a tilting axis that is substantially parallel to a longitudinal  
4 axis of the table; and  
5 automatically displacing the table top towards a middle position transversely to the  
6 longitudinal axis of the table during the tilting of the table top.

1 12. The method of claim 11, wherein the table top is automatically transversely displaced  
2 when a predetermined critical angle is exceeded during the tilting of the table top.

1 13. The method of claim 12, wherein the critical angle is predetermined as a function of the  
2 displacement of the table top from its middle position transversely to the longitudinal axis  
3 of the table.

1 14. The method of claim 13, further comprising measuring a tilt angle of the table top.

1 15. The method of claim 14, further comprising comparing the measured tilt angle with a  
2 predetermined critical angle.

1 16. The method of claim 15, further comprising calculating the predetermined critical angle  
2 as a function of a displacement of the table top transversely to the longitudinal axis of the  
3 table.

1 17. The method of claim 15, further comprising storing values of predetermined critical angle  
2 values as a function of the displacement of the table top.